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## ABSTRACT

Intended to help teachers assess the effectiveness of their reading program, this paper suggests how teachers can emphasize comprehension in reading, what behaviors students demonstrate related to getting and creating meaning when reading, and how the classroom environment can promote reading for meaning. After describing effective teacher and student behavior during reading, holistic evaluations of student reading comprehension, and student created classroom environments, the paper presents a checklist, or evaluation guide, for teacher self-evaluation. Of primary importance in each section of the evaluation guide is the emphasis upon children's language, interests, and experiences; functional and useful reading; opportunities for self-correction when reading does not make sense; and the promotion of student risk-taking through reasonable guesses, predictions, and interpretations. (HTH)

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## Are You Promoting Reading For Comprehension? A Guide For Self-Evaluation

By

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Barbara Edwards

Effective evaluation of the teacher's ability to help youngsters learn to read remains a concern for teachers and their supervisors. Teachers interested in improving their effectiveness in teaching reading for comprehension search for practical tools and methods which can be put to use in the classroom to provide them information about their performance. It is the teacher who must face the question of effectiveness everyday in order to plan for the next day, select teaching materials, develop teaching strategies, and make all the other instructional decisions necessary in the elementary reading curriculum.

Teacher supervisors from universities and school systems also need evaluation criteria to make well-informed judgments about teacher and program effectiveness and to provide helpful feed back to teachers (Sanacore, 1981). The classroom observation skills of university students may also be enhanced through the use of an observation guide related to promoting reading for meaning.

Although many teacher evaluation models have been developed, frequently the focus of the instrument appears to be narrow or undimensional. For example, some models look only at the teacher or a particular aspect of teacher behavior, such as the types of questions teachers use. Others may address singular aspects of student behavior, such as performance on group achievement tests. Another problem is that some teacher evaluation instruments are not designed on the basis of an underlying philosophy concerning what actually constitutes an effective teaching/learning environment for reading. Frequently evaluation forms appear to be an eclectic smorgasboard of teacher behaviors, rather than selected behaviors or indicators which are congruent with the research literature on the goal of all reading: comprehension of the reading material by the reader.

The guidelines suggested in this article provide a framework for assessing teaching effectiveness relative to reading within the total classroom environment. Specific teacher behaviors which relate to helping others learn to read are addressed, as well as indices of student behaviors and environmental variables. Those guidelines are based upon a model of the reading process which assumes that comprehension and understanding of written material is the goal for all readers, and therefore, for all teachers.

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### A model of reading based on comprehension

A model of reading which focuses on comprehension as the overriding, central issue for all readers is based on the knowledge that reading is a complex interaction between the language and thought of the author and the language and thought of the reader (Goodman, 1967). Proficient readers are actively involved in a search for meaning (Goodman, 1976). Readers use their background of experience and their knowledge of language as they process print. In other words, readers must bring something to the print in order to get something from it (Smith, 1979).

This interaction places a responsibility on the reader that involves far more than a skills approach to reading. Our view of the reading process is not rooted in skills that try to splinter language into small units of letters, sounds, syllables and words in isolation, which readers are asked to sit down and study. Rather, we view reading as involving the processing of whole language (simultaneously composed of letters, sounds, grammar and meaning) where meaning is found in the interrelationship of past experiences and the words in the total story or article or text. (Watson, et. al., 1979)

Based on what they already know from experience and from use of language readers make predictions about what is to follow in the text (Goodman, 1967). As they read, they sample the text to confirm or reject the predictions which are continually being generated. All readers make errors or miscues while reading. Effective readers, those who read for meaning and comprehension, usually make miscues which do not alter the basic meaning the author is trying to convey (Au, 1977). Effective readers monitor their reading, aware that the reading must make sense to them. When miscues are made which do alter the meaning, good readers realize the reading no longer makes sense. They may choose to go back, find where they got off the track and correct the miscue, or they may decide they have not missed important information and go on to see if they can pick up the meaning as they continue. Proficient readers also will often change something in the text to make the text more closely correspond to their own familiar dialect or speech patterns (Goodman and Goodman, 1978). "Proficient readers, therefore, are readers who, while miscuing during reading, produce miscues that in the majority of instances do not affect comprehension" (Watson, et. al., 1979).

Teachers can encourage all children to become proficient readers whose goal is to comprehend the material they are reading. Through the use of the following evaluation guide and its explanation, teachers can make informed decisions about their effectiveness in promoting reading for meaning throughout the entire day.

### Teacher behaviors

What can teachers do to help youngsters maintain the rule that reading needs to make sense to them? How can teachers help young readers reject nonsense and continue to seek meaning in all that they read? What kinds of teacher behaviors could an observer look for which indicate that the teacher is continually nurturing reading for meaning in the classroom?

#### Directions and questions during guided reading

Teachers who are helping children read for meaning encourage students to use what they already know about a subject before they read in order to make predictions about the content. For example, if the story is about a circus, the teacher may initiate a discussion about children's experiences with the circus. The children are given opportunity to use vocabulary and concepts they have previously acquired which are connected with this new subject. In this way, vocabulary and concepts presented in the story are anticipated, and thus, comprehension of new ideas increases when tied to what has been known previously. In addition, children are given opportunity to interact and get personally involved with the ideas they are going to be reading about.

Teachers encourage children to use as many cues as needed to make predictions and read for meaning. Illustrations are discussed, and questions about the story are formulated around them. Chapter titles and section headings are read and used as an overview or preview because they can give additional cues about the content which follows.

Helping children formulate and set their own questions and purposes for reading is important. The goal is for students to become independent, self-directing readers. Thus, the teachers nurtures children to develop their own questions, as opposed to always asking the guiding questions. Teachers do this by discussing with the children their experiences with the story or topic to be read, noting illustrations and titles, and then asking the children to predict what questions they think could be answered by reading a page of a story.

The next important step is to follow up on the prediction after the reading by asking "Were you right about what you thought was going to happen next?" Discuss with the children the ways in which their predictions were similar or dissimilar to what was read. The goal is not that the prediction is right or wrong, but that children are interacting with the text by anticipating reasonable and logical happenings and conclusions.

Another useful strategy is to ask children to read a story silently (after predictions have been made relative to story content), and be able to tell about the story in their own words when they finish. When this expectation is set, retelling has been found to be a powerful organizing strategy for readers. Frequently, ideas seem to come together during the retelling which may not have been completely clear to the reader while the story was being read.

Silent reading, itself, is also of crucial importance. Research is clearly demonstrating that readers read more quickly, efficiently, and can better concentrate on the meaning of the story when reading silently than when reading orally (Smith, 1979). Most people have experienced reading or singing aloud at religious services and concentrating so hard on making no mistakes that passages had to be silently re-read later to determine the meaning of what had been "read". Teachers help children want to read silently by reminding them that their teachers and parents read silently most of the time when they read.

Teachers will also use questions which have multiple possibilities for answers. These teachers will be concerned with answers that are reasonable and appropriate, not limited to being "right" or "wrong". They will encourage children to compare the characters and events of the reading with people and experiences in their own lives. Teachers will ask questions such as, "If you were that person, what would you do? How would you have behaved? If that would happen to you now, what would you do differently?" Children can also be encouraged to create their own endings to stories. They can think about stories to determine why the story is important, why it was written, or why the author described a situation in a particular way. Strategies such as these help children clarify their thinking and understanding of the material they are reading.

### Corrections

When children are asked to read orally to share a passage or verify a significant event in the story, teachers supporting reading for comprehension keep several points in mind. If children come to a part they have trouble reading, they are encouraged to skip that part and read on, using the context to help determine the unknown part. When readers miscue, that is, when they change, insert, or omit parts of the story, and the underlying meaning of the text is not altered, attention is now drawn to the miscue because the child is comprehending the basic intent of the author. However, when miscues are made which do change the meaning, teachers promoting reading for meaning bite their tongues! They want the reader to realize the story is no longer making sense, and to do so, they must give the opportunity for self-correction. If the reader does not self-correct, teachers draw on the child's knowledge of the syntax and sense of language. Teachers may re-read the passage the way the child read it and ask, "Does that sound right?" or "Does that make sense? What could sound right and make sense to you?" Children are encouraged to venture a reasonable guess, to "take a risk," and to realize that learning also comes from making mistakes.

Similarly, when children translate the text into their dialect and speech patterns which are familiar to them, they are demonstrating that they comprehend the message the author is conveying. Teachers who are encouraging readers to concentrate on meaning understand this translation process and do not call attention to the reader's changes.

Related instructional activities should reinforce the goal of reading for meaning. Children should experience reading as being useful and necessary for them to do the things they view as important. Therefore, teachers draw on the interests of the children to determine themes, units, and projects for study in the classroom. Using themes and topics of real interest to children causes various reasons and uses for reading to become a natural part of the curriculum. For example, if the theme is Indians, a variety of books at various reading levels would be available in the classroom. Children may find a card catalogue useful in finding more books in school or local libraries. Indexes, tables of contents, dictionaries and encyclopedias are all put to use because they are necessary for the information children want to find. Letters may be written for additional information to the Bureau of Indian Affairs, to local Indian representatives, or to people in the community who may be Indian or have collections of Indian relics. Real and fictional stories about Indians, Indian mythology, and poetry may be integrated into the theme. Children write or dictate stories, books, and reports about Indians and illustrate them. These are placed on a classroom library shelf so that others may read and share them. Pictures are drawn or painted, or models are built to depict an aspect of the theme.

Individual and group activities involve talking, think, planning, doing, and evaluating events in the classroom. Differing points of view are clarified and interpreted. Values within the group emerge. Math and social studies also become significant as children explore living conditions, food, clothing, habits, and customs of the tribes.

Teachers also read aloud to children frequently. Not only do children experience the pleasure which reading brings, but they hear language used in a variety of ways. This experience with varying uses of language enables children to more readily predict and comprehend when they read another person's written language.

How different these uses of talking, listening, reading, and writing are compared to the skills found in skillbooks and on ditto pages, isolated from their real use in the real world, and frequently meaningless to children because there is no connection to significant events in their daily lives. In all of these activities, language is "whole language" used in a meaningful context, not presented in isolated pieces such as letters, sounds and word lists, or in contrived, artificial situations.

#### Student evaluation

Rather than relying on standardized tests, teachers encouraging reading for meaning look to the behavior of children to determine instructional decisions. Standardized tests are limited in their usefulness because they have not been normed on the children in a particular classroom, and the goals upon which the test is based may not be the same goals the teacher has relative to reading for comprehension. For example, if a test has only words in isolation as the indicator for reading ability, reading comprehension is not even an objective of the test's author. Teachers have the judgment and

ability to observe children, note what they are doing, and make decisions about what should be done next. By asking questions of children, listening to them, observing how they handle books and what they do with print, and by giving natural opportunities for writing and observing the responses, a wealth of valuable information may be obtained. Teachers use this information, drawn from the child's behavior, to make decisions about appropriate classroom strategies for promoting reading comprehension.

### Student Behaviors

Teachers cannot ever take full credit for student performance, because of the myriad of other contributing factors; however, the influence of the teacher is undeniable. Therefore, a valuable way of checking to see if the teacher is influencing students to read for meaning is to observe students' behavior during reading instruction and their self-initiated reading behaviors.

#### Behaviors during reading instruction

Students reading for meaning tend to skip words they don't know with the intention of getting overall meaning without that word, or of figuring out that word (if it's important) when they grasp the surrounding context. Students also tend to make miscues that make sense when they are reading for meaning; these miscues preserve the grammar, or syntax, and the semantic properties of the sentence; they may or may not resemble the grapho-phonemic characteristics of the actual printed word. Students are willing to risk making mistakes about individual words, as they tentatively supply a word or two and read on to see if it makes sense.

A noticeable behavior of students reading for meaning is that they monitor what they have read, and make comments such as "That didn't sound right" or "That didn't make sense," when, indeed, the meaning was significantly altered by miscues or when the content was too difficult for the student's conceptual grasp. Students then often re-read to clarify their initial hypotheses about what the author had said, and modify accordingly to make the print make better sense to them.

Risk-taking behavior is seen not only in reference to guessing reasonably about words, but about possible inferences, predictions, and criticisms as students use their own experiences, values, and ideas to interact with the ideas of the author and the questions or directions of the teacher. That is, students reading for meaning are not reading for right answers alone; they are thinking and interpreting as they read and react to print.

Students often set their own purposes for reading when they are focused on getting meaning. They are not dependent upon the teacher to ask guiding questions to direct their attention toward the next few lines or paragraphs or pages. Students are more apt to spend time discussing the selection in terms of possible outcomes, reasons for characters' behaviors, interpretations of events, and so forth, as opposed to spending time striving for word-perfect oral reading while others in the group follow along, perhaps politely. When

oral reading does occur, it is spontaneous and contextual; it is done to clarify an expressed idea or interpretation; it is done to share an exciting part or a particularly well-turned phrase. And ... when oral reading of this sort occurs in the group; the others listen; they do not follow along in their books waiting for a mistake so that they can shout out the correct word. The focus remains upon meaning, whether the readers are reading silently or reading aloud for others to listen.

More difficult to observe objectively, but extremely important to identify is the air of enthusiasm students bring to the reading instructional activities when they know reading is meaningful. They come to the group readily, with comments and questions about what they are to read or have read, with opinions about what will happen or what did happen and why, with ideas of what should have happened instead, and with an eagerness to hear others' ideas. There is less competition and more consideration of multiple points of view as students relinquish the security of "right answers" in exchange for reasonable interpretations and individual opinions.

#### Self-initiated reading behaviors

When students move away from the notion of the absolute importance of getting "the words" right, they are free to consider meaning, and therefore, to learn from print, to enjoy a story, to laugh at a joke - even when they don't know all the words. Students who see these possibilities in their reading will choose to read in their spare time, for purposes of their own. These elements of choosing and setting their own purposes are crucial if students are to be in charge of their reading.

From the position of having chosen to read, students tend to share their "treasures" excitedly. This sharing is natural, like any other sharing of experiences among children, as opposed to the well-known, forced and stilted book reports drearily droned in so many classes. Children may choose to share their reading materials by recommending a book, tantalizing others about its secrets and adventures, by reading parts or even all of it to interested listeners, or by just generally talking about the content. Children also write their own books and read books written by their classmates.

Reading abilities often taught as isolated skills to be mastered for the sole purpose of mastery now become tools to be used, "mastered" or not, by readers in quest of meaning. They will use an index, a glossary, a table of contents, a card catalogue, or an encyclopedia quite naturally as they pursue questions or purposes they have set for themselves. Children often seek additional materials by the same author or read alternative materials on the same subject. They may compare different sources of information for author's credentials, accuracy, bias, and point of view.

If permitted, students will often organize to dramatize favorite stories, becoming the characters with great feeling and establishing the setting with hastily chosen materials for props. The action moves swiftly,

with students sometimes reading, sometimes adlibbing, and often paraphrasing the essence of the story line. Word-perfect reading is not the issue; the focus of attention is on the action, the characterization, the setting, and the general tone of the story -- all elements of meaning for young readers.

Students may also use written materials to assist them in projects requiring construction or assembly. Following directions, then, becomes a real need, with students striving for precise understanding in order to accomplish a chosen task.

In general, whether in instructional or independent contexts, students who read for meaning do not view reading as an end in itself. Instead, reading is a way, a vehicle, a process by which to communicate ideas, feelings, information, values, and experiences which may be beyond their present physical surroundings. Reading is a way to develop, test, and confirm, modify, or reject their hypotheses about the world.

### The environment

Observation of the classroom's physical environment can give valuable indication of the kind of on-going approaches to reading which are common to that classroom. Obviously, observation of the teaching strategies and the students' reading behaviors are the richest indicators of the presence or absence of promoting reading for meaning. However, there is additional insight to be gained by noticing elements of the physical environment for congruency with observed teacher/learner behaviors. These elements may be classified into the categories of materials and equipment provided for the students, materials created by the students, and the utilization of space.

#### Materials and equipment provided for the students

Of utmost importance is the presence of materials for students to read, or more specifically, for them to choose to read. Ideally, such materials would pertain to a variety of student interests and experiences, and would encompass a wide range of reading levels. These materials would also include a rich variety of language types and usage. Equally important is the presence of such tangible things as pictures, objects, animals, and materials from outside the classroom which will stimulate children's interests in reading and writing. Such realia may be present, but if it is being used by students in relation to their reading and writing, then there will be evidence of this relationship; there will be labels, experience stories (as opposed to word lists), diagrams, books beside materials, and so on. The areas containing the materials and books will probably not be in the neatest condition if children are actually interacting with these materials throughout the day.

In a classroom whose members emphasize reading for meaning, there will be things to read other than published books. There will be ordinary things from daily life, such as cereal boxes, cans, riddles, games with directions to follow, newspapers, cartoons, and street signs. There will be independent centers, activity areas, and equipment with suggestions or guidelines for use.

Plus ... activities in those independent centers will necessitate reading for meaning; they will not contain isolated skill work. There will be problems to solve which require reading, such as participating in designing a bulletin board, adding to an on-going class project like a model (milk carton) city, or following a recipe.

There will be evidence of the opportunity for students to listen to reading. Many classrooms have tapes or records of books being read, but additional observations to pursue would involve noticing whether these tapes or records and the necessary equipment are accessible to students and whether they show signs of frequent use. Of even greater refinement would be to notice whether the most available tapes or records correlate with other books, materials, projects, bulletin boards, and activities in the classroom. That is, is there any apparent relationship between materials and equipment provided for the students and the interests of those students as suggested by the work they are generating independently?

#### Materials created by the students

There should be many places in the classroom to look for students' work in order to observe the characteristics of that work. If students' papers are displayed on bulletin boards, they should be current, related to other activities observed in the room, different from each other in content, and they should not be letter-perfect or have numerous red marks on them. This latter criterion is usually particularly difficult for teachers, since displays of students' work reflect upon their teaching and their standards for excellence. If the orientation within the classroom environment is toward getting and creating meaning, then perfection of print is not the ultimate standard of excellence, for readers create and perceive meaning which goes far beyond the surface structure of the actual print.

There should be many, many examples of books and stories written by the children, even though this kind of work frequently goes home. A section of the classroom library should contain the works of the classroom authors themselves. Many students may bind their own books in various ways, insert a library card and pocket, and include themselves in the card catalogue.

There should be projects of various sorts which required different kinds of student input and resourcefulness. Such variety of projects implies a high degree of student choosing, individual and cooperative work, and that reading has been used as a tool to help accomplish such projects. If the projects appear to be on-going, expandable kinds of activities, and if they seem to be related to an overall theme evident throughout the classroom, then the teacher and students are probably attempting to approach meaning from the strong vantage point of relatedness. Activities which are related throughout the day tend to be more helpful to the processes of getting and creating meaning than do fragmented, ends-in-themselves activities serving more as time-fillers than as purposeful units of some realistic, larger picture. Painful as it may be to many teachers, this last idea means that the purple ditto sheets, the skills workbooks, and the task cards are in direct opposition to helping students learn to read for meaning and to view reading

as a meaningful process. Given other options, not many children choose to work on ditto sheets in their spare time; a book, a project, a conversation are ever so much more useful and desirable.

### Utilization of space

Classrooms with an environmental emphasis upon getting and creating meaning are not static; they are dynamic. Furniture, equipment, materials, and participants are shifted about to allow for emerging activities that make sense to the students and the teacher. Even within a snapshot observation, it should be apparent that different kinds of activities do occur in the classroom. For instance, is there an area where quiet, relaxed reading can occur, such as a rug in the corner with pillows and beanbag chairs? Is there a place where several children can work together on a project without disturbing others or feeling that they must overly constrain their talking and enthusiasm? Is the classroom library accessible to children? Are pictures, posters, children's work, and other eye-catching material low enough to be admired, read, and studied by young children? Are there places for children's stories, letters, drawings, and other work to be displayed? The physical size and design of classrooms vary, of course, but the utilization of the space, furniture, and equipment available can become enhanced in any environment when teachers and students share the goal of gaining meaning from reading, and therefore, from the entire school curriculum.

### Summary

The purpose of this article and the evaluation guide which follows was to give interested professionals a practical tool for observing how a teacher is emphasizing comprehension in reading, what behaviors students are demonstrating related to getting and creating meaning when reading, and how the environment may support such pursuits. The evaluation guide is grounded in an orientation toward the reading process which focuses on comprehension. The guide is not intended to be all-inclusive, but rather suggestive of the kinds of elements present in a classroom whose participants value and promote reading for meaning. Of primary importance in each section of the evaluation guide is the emphasis upon children's language, interests, and experiences; functional and useful reading; opportunities for self-correction when reading doesn't make sense; and upon the promotion of risk-taking through reasonable guesses, predictions, and interpretations.

Are You Promoting Reading For Comprehension?  
A Guide For Self-Evaluation

Teacher Behaviors

Directions and Questions During Guided Reading

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Helps students relate what they already know to the material about to be read.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Encourages students to formulate their own questions about the material to be read.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Gives children opportunity for talking about the subject.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Notes illustrations, titles, and chapter headings, and uses them to help children make predictions about the story.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Has children compare actual content with their predictions without an emphasis on "right answers".
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Asks children to be ready to tell the story in their own words after they read silently. (Instructions for retelling are given before the children read.)
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Encourages children to read silently.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Encourages students to compare characters and events in the story with people and situations they know about.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Asks students to create original endings to stories.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Asks questions requiring reflection and multiple possible answers.

Corrections

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Provides opportunity for self-correction by children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Encourages risk-taking, or reasonable guessing, by children.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Asks guiding questions when students do not self-correct, such as "Does that make sense? Does that sound right? What would make sense and sound right to you?"
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Encourages children to skip unknown parts and use the context to help them determine the missing part.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Accepts miscues which do not alter the basic meaning, including dialect-related miscues.

Instructional Activities

- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Provides opportunities for reading and writing which are useful and functional for children at the time of the activity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Draws from the interests of children to plan the curriculum.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Relates uses of reading and writing to overall topics and themes so that children experience the interrelationships.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Encourages children to write or dictate their own books.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Reads aloud to children from many different types of material.

Student Evaluation

- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Gathers first-hand data from children to evaluate reading progress and to determine instructional decisions in the classroom.

## Student Behaviors

### Behaviors During Reading Instruction

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Skips unknown words or parts of text in order to pursue the overall idea.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Makes tentative guesses about words, based on context and other clues.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Makes miscues which make sense.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Self-corrects miscues which alter the meaning or don't make sense.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Evaluates own reading with comments such as "That didn't sound right" or "That didn't make sense."
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Re-reads to self-correct or to re-check what was said.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Offers interpretations, opinions, and predictions about the content.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. Listens and reflects upon others' interpretations, opinions, and predictions.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Sets own purposes for reading.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Reads orally for a particular purpose, such as clarifying a point or sharing an exciting part.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Listens to another student read orally and may comment on the content.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Actively participates in the lesson.

### Self-Initiated Reading Behaviors

- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Chooses to read during spare time.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Sets own purposes for reading.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Spontaneously shares reading materials with others, through conversation or oral reading.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Recommends reading materials to other students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. Uses resource material in pursuit of information, not as an end in itself.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Compares different sources of information.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Considers or chooses to read books by the same author.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Organizes with others to depict an enjoyed selection through drama, art, music, project development, and/or demonstration.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Uses written material to assist in the construction or assemblage of a project.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. Shows feelings related to the content of the material.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 23. Writes own stories or books.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 24. Reads stories or books written by classmates.

## The Environment

### Materials and Equipment Provided for the Students

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Wide variety of materials to read, in terms of types, content, and levels.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. Wide variety of materials for students to touch, explore, and read and write about.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. Things to read from daily life, such as food packages, recipes, games with directions to follow, street signs, newspapers.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. Independent activity centers with directions to follow.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. Equipment which may be used by children, accessible, with directions to follow.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. Problems to solve which require reading, such as bulletin board designs, on-going class projects, cooking, or treasure hunts.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. Equipment and materials for listening to reading.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. An apparent relationship between materials and equipment provided and thematic interests expressed by the students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. Means for on-going written communication within the class, such as student mailboxes.

#### Materials Created by the Students

- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. Displays of students' work involving their thinking about reading selections.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. Displays of students' work which still contains "errors" and few or no teacher corrections or editing.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. Displays of students' work which relates to themes or topics of interest to the students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. Bulletin boards created by students related to reading they have done.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. Projects which relate to reading materials, or which required reading to develop.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. Stories, books, letters written by the students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. Reports, diagrams, explanations developed by students.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. A library of works by classroom authors.

#### Utilization of Space

- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. Places for relaxed reading, such as a rug or some kind of nook.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. Places for cooperative working.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. Accessible classroom library area.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. Places for construction projects to be built and displayed.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 22. Places for displaying children's work.

NOTE: These items are not intended to be exhaustive; nor is it anticipated that every teacher emphasizing comprehension would have all these examples in the classroom. The space below is provided for additional indicators of teaching reading for meaning.

Comments:

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